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UNCLAS HARARE 001376

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

INL/C FOR DLUNA AND JBRANDOLINO
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JFRAZER
LONDON FOR CGURNEY
PARIS FOR CNEARY
TREASURY FOR EBARBER AND CWILKINSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [KSEP](#) [SOCI](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: USG ANTICORRUPTION EFFORTS IN ZIMBABWE

REF: SECSTATE 90733

¶1. (SBU) Corruption at the official level in Zimbabwe has increased markedly in the last several years as the Government has systematically undermined the rule of law to browbeat political opponents and the ruling party has expanded its already considerable system of patronage. Corruption, once confined to petty transgressions, has evolved into something on a grand scale, and it has permeated every level of society from senior ministers and parastatal executives to civil servants and peasants. Nearly everyone with ties to government or the ruling party has benefited from the government's illegal and massive grab of commercial farms. A political environment of impunity has allowed opportunists to flourish and senior officials to plunder the country's dwindling resources. The Government's half-hearted effort at an Anti-Corruption Commission in the late 1990s floundered and it remains unfunded and unstaffed. Prosecutors have not pursued pending corruption cases against several ministers and other high-level officials despite promises from the head of state at the time that justice would be swift and impartial.

¶2. (SBU) Against this backdrop and given current chilly US-Zimbabwe relations, the USG provides no anti-corruption technical assistance to the GOZ. Given the GOZ's demonstrated lack of political will to fight corruption and its history of politicizing and misusing direct assistance, we would not encourage extending any assistance to the GOZ in this area, nor would we advocate inviting GOZ representatives to attend the anti-corruption conferences in South Korea next year.

¶3. (SBU) There are no notable efforts in the Zimbabwe private sector to temper corruption, but civil society groups periodically press the GOZ to rein in corruption. Transparency International Zimbabwe (TIZ) leads the civil society effort, and has a director who coordinates with other local NGOs, such as ZimRights and the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries, in fighting corruption. USAID funds a \$100,000/year TIZ program that works with the Parliament of Zimbabwe's Public Accounts Committee in advocating anti-corruption efforts in the public sector and in closing loopholes in legislation that make corrupt practices easier. For example, TIZ is seeking the repeal of sections of the District Development Fund Act that tend to encourage corruption at the local level. TIZ also continues to press the GOZ, through the Ministry of Justice, to fund and staff the Anti-Corruption Commission, and permit it to undertake its mandated mission. The USG also sponsored TIZ's director, John Makumbe, on an International Visitor Program visit to the U.S. in early 2002.

SULLIVAN